بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

The Water of Zamzam

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Preface

Praise belongs to Allah.

We praise Him, seek His help and ask His forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of our selves and our evil actions.

"If Allah leads someone astray, he has no guide. But if Allah guides someone, no one can lead him astray." (39:37)

I bear witness there there is no god but Allah alone with no partner and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. The Almighty says:

"O you who believe! Fear Allah with the fear that is His due and do not die except as Muslims." (3:102)

"O Mankind! Fear your Lord Who created you from a single self and created its mate from it and then dissemi-nated many men and women from the two of them. Fear Allah in Whose Name you make demands on one another and also fear Him in respect of your families. Allah watches over you continually." (4:1)

"O you who believe! Fear Allah and speak words which hit the mark, and He will make your actions right for you and forgive you your wrong deeds. He who obeys Allah and His Messenger has won a mighty victory." (33:70-71)

Foreword

We start by affirming that without any doubt the best water on the face of the earth is the water of Zamzam. It satisfies hunger and is a cure for illness. Zamzam water obtains for its drinkers whatever it is they drink it for. The water of Zamzam was a miracle given to one of the Prophets of Allah, Isma'il, peace and blessings be upon him.

The intention of this book is to explore the virtues of Zamzam water in the light of the *Shari'a*, and to learn how each of us can benefit from it. We will examine the state of people who drink Zamzam water with good intentions, such as to suffice them on the Day of the Greatest Thirst or for increase of wealth or for useful knowledge or for healing and other such purposes. We will investigate the origin of Zamzam and how long its water will last. We will discuss particular experiences which have been reported as the result of drinking Zamzam, and how Allah healed people of illnesses which the doctors of the world thought incurable.

We shall explore some questions of *fiqh*: about whether Zamzam or Kawthar is better and whether it is permitted to transport Zamzam water away from its land of origin and other such questions regarding Zamzam water.

Our method in all of this will be to examine the sound *hadiths* of the Prophet about this subject and also to gather together the reports of the early Muslims related to it. If we have been correct in what we have presented, it is by the favour of Allah alone. If anything else is the case, the fault is ours alone. It is enough for us that Allah knows what is in people's hearts.

We end with the words: Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

Majdi Fathi as-Sayyid Ibrahim

The Names given to the Water of Zamzam

Many names have been given to the water of Zamzam: among them are *Zammam, Zumazim, Shuba'a, Hazmat al-Malik* and *Rakdat Jibril*.

Ibn Bari said, "Zamzam has eleven names: Zamzam, the Sealed, That Which is Clung to, the Watering, the Quenching, the Impulse of Jibril, the Kick of Jibril, the Repletion, the Healer of Sickness, the Satisfier of Hunger, and the Well of 'Abd al-Muttalib."

Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both him and his father, said, "We used to call it 'the Repletion'."

Wahb ibn Munabbih related concerning this: "We find it mentioned in the Book of Allah. It is the Water of the Pious, the Repletion, the Satisfier of Hunger and the Healer of Sickness. It will never dry up and should not be criticised."

It is related that Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both him and his father, said, "Pray in the prayer-place of the good and drink the water of the pious." He was asked, "What is the prayer-place of the good?" He replied, "Under the *Mizab* (the water-spout of the Ka'ba)." He was asked, "What is the water of the pious?" He said, "It is Zamzam, which is honoured above every other drink."

Many statements have reached us about the reason for naming it Zamzam. One is that it is because it is abundant and water which is *zamzam* is abundant. It is also said that *zamzima* means 'the community'. According to al-Harbi it is called Zamzam because of its movement, reportedly because it is attached (*zammat*) to the balance so that it does not veer to the right or the left. Various other reasons will come to light during the course of the book and

we will mention them in the appropriate places with the help of Allah.

Congratulations to you, my brother Muslim, if you drink from the Spring of Repletion to which people cling on account of its inestimable preciousness!

O Allah! Do not let us depart from this world without having drunk our fill of the water of Zamzam!

The First Appearance of Zamzam

In his *Sahih*, Imam al-Bukhari relates that Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both him and his father, said:

"The first woman to use a girdle was the mother of Isma'il. She used a girdle to hide her pregnancy from Sara. Then Ibrahim brought her and her son, Isma'il, whom she was nursing, and put her near the House (the Ka'ba) by a tall tree above Zamzam in the upper part of the mosque. At that time no one lived in Makka and there was no water there. He put them there and left with her a bag with some dates in it and a waterskin with some water in it. Then Ibrahim went back the way he had come. Isma'il's mother followed after him, saying, 'O Ibrahim! Where are you going, leaving us in this valley in which there are no people or anything else?' She said that to him several times but he did not turn round to her. She asked him, 'Has Allah commanded you to do this?' 'Yes,' was the reply. She said, 'Then He will not let us come to any harm,' and went back. Ibrahim went on until he reached ath-Thaniyya where they could not see him. He turned to face the House and then made a supplication using these words. He raised his hands and said: *'Our Lord, I have settled some of my offspring by Your Sacred House in a valley with no cultivation. Make the hearts of mankind incline towards them and provide them with fruits so that perhaps they will be thankful.'* (14:37)

"Isma'il's mother suckled him and drank from the water until the water in the skin had run out. She became thirsty, and so did her son. She looked at him writhing about" - or he said, "rolling on the ground" - "and then walked away,

not wanting to look at him. Safa was the nearest hill to her and she climbed up it and looked around the valley to see if there was anyone there. She could not see anyone and descended from Safa until she reached the river bed. Then she lifted up the hem of her skirt and ran as people run when overwrought until she had crossed the river bed. Then she came to Marwa and stood on it and looked to see if there was anyone there. She could not see anyone. She did that seven times." (Ibn 'Abbas added here that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, then said: "That is why people run between them.")

"Then, when on Marwa, she looked and heard a voice which said, 'Listen!' She strained her ears to hear and listen. She said, 'I am listening if You have any relief for me.' Suddenly there was an angel at the site of Zamzam. He struck the ground with his heel - or his wing - until water appeared. She formed her hands into a container and began to scoop up the water into her waterskin and it bubbled up again each time she scooped."

Ibn 'Abbas reported that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said: "May Allah have mercy on the mother of Isma'il. If she had left Zamzam" - or he said, "If she had not scooped up the water" - "Zamzam would have been a running stream."

He said, "She drank and suckled her son and the angel said to her, 'Have no fear that you may perish. This boy and his father will build a House here for Allah. Allah will not let its people perish.'

"The House was higher than the land around it, like an incline to which floods come and then go to the right and left. She remained in that state until a group of the Jurhum, or people from a clan of Jurhum, coming by way of Kada', halted at the bottom of Makka and saw birds circling around. They remarked, 'These birds are circling around water. We are familiar with this valley and there is no water in it.' They sent one or two scouts and when they found the water they returned and told them. They

advanced and found Isma'il's mother at the water. They asked, 'Will you give us permission to alight here with you?' She replied, 'Yes, but you have no rights over the water.' They said, 'We agree to that.'"

Ibn 'Abbas reported that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said: "This happened to Isma'il's mother because she desired human company. They alighted and sent for their families, and made their homes there with them so that they became settled people. The boy grew up and learned Arabic from them."

The Covering Up of Zamzam

Yahya Kushk says in his book, *Zamzam*, that Jurhum drank from the water of Zamzam and continued to do so as long as Allah willed until the spring of Zamzam ran dry and it became hidden, no trace of it remaining. Scholars disagree about the reason why Zamzam ran dry and the well disappeared. Some have ascribed it to climatic reasons. Historians tend to ascribe it to ethical reasons, saying that when Jurhum showed disrespect to the Haram, neglected the sanctity of the House, consumed the endowments of the Ka‘ba which had been given to it secretly and openly, and committed terrible deeds there as well, Zamzam water dried up and stopped and the site of the well was obliterated and disappeared.

‘Amr ibn al-Harith ibn Madad admonished Jurhum about their committing injustices in the Haram and their showing disrespect to the House, and he threatened them with divine vengeance. He told them, “Makka is a land which will not tolerate injustice. Fear Allah before someone arrives to drive you out of it in humiliation and abasement. You wish to stop people circling the House but you do not have the authority to do that.” When they refused to restrain themselves and did not heed his warning, he took two gold gazelles and some Qal‘ite swords which were in the Ka‘ba and buried them secretly at night at the site of Zamzam. Then Allah gave Khuza‘a power over Jurhum and they drove them out of the Haram and took charge of the Ka‘ba and took power in Makka as Allah willed. The site of Zamzam had already been lost at that time.

Some historians claim that one of the masters of Makka, Madad ibn ‘Amr al-Jurhumi, had been involved in a war with his enemies which had ended in his defeat. Knowing that his enemies would soon expel him from Makka, he decided to deprive them of the principal source of water in Makka. He buried some of his precious items and gold in the well of Zamzam and then destroyed it and concealed its whereabouts, piling up sand on top of the well until it was covered over. Then Madad fled to Yemen.

After this the people of Makka had to look for new sources of water. So they dug other wells, mostly outside Makka since ground water is the city’s sole source of water. Makka lacks regular rainfall as well as rivers and springs. Qusayy ibn Kilab, the grandfather of ‘Abd al-Muttalib, used to bring water to the pilgrims in basins. He used to transport it from the wells outside Makka, including the Well of Maymun al-Hadari. Then Qusayy dug the well of al-‘Ajul in the house of Umm Hani bint Abi Talib which was the first well to be dug within Makka. When the Arabs drew water from it, they composed a poem:

> We were quenched at al-‘Ajul and then we left.
> Qusayy has been faithful and true.

The well of al-‘Ajul remained in existence throughout the life of Qusayy and after his death until ‘Abd Manaf ibn Qusayy grew up. Then a man of the Banu Ju‘ayl fell into it and they stopped using it; it was covered over and then each tribe dug a separate well. The Banu Tamim ibn Murra dug al-Jafr, which is the well of Murra bint Ka‘b. ‘Abd Shams ibn ‘Abd Manaf dug another well and called it at-Tawi. Hashim also dug a well called Sajla which remained in the possession of the Banu Hashim until ‘Abd al-Muttalib rediscovered Zamzam, when he gave Sajla to the Banu Nawfal ibn ‘Abd Manaf. Umayya ibn ‘Abd Shams dug the well of al-Hafr, and had sole use of its waters. The Banu Sahm dug the well al-Ghamr.

There were also a number of wells outside Makka. Their history dates from the times of the first leaders of Quraysh - Murra ibn Ka‘b and Kilab ibn Murra. The most famous of them were the well of Rumm, which Murra ibn Ka‘b ibn Lu’ayy dug, and the well of Dumm which Kilab ibn Murra dug.

The Rediscovery of Zamzam

Imam az-Zuhri says, "The first thing reported about 'Abd al-Muttalib, the grandfather of the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, is that Quraysh left the Haram of Makka, fleeing from the people of the Elephant, when he was a young lad. He said, "By Allah, I will not leave the Haram of Allah seeking might other than His!" So he sat by the House and Quraysh left him. He said:

> O Allah, if men protect their camps,
> You will surely protect Your camp.
> Do not let their forces be victorious
> and their strength overcome Yours.

He remained firm until Allah Almighty had destroyed the Elephant and its people and Quraysh returned. He was esteemed among them for his steadfastness and his respect for the sacred things of Allah. Then the eldest of his sons was born: al-Harith ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib. After he had come of age 'Abd al-Muttalib had a dream in which he was told: "Dig Zamzam, which is hidden." He woke up and said, "O Allah, explain it to me!"

Then he had another dream: "Dig Zamzam. It is hidden under some offal in the place where the crow pecks at the ant hill, facing the red idols."

'Abd al-Muttalib got up and went and sat in the Sacred Mosque waiting for the signs to appear. A cow was being sacrificed at Hazura and it escaped from the man who was slaughtering it while still alive and death overcame it in the mosque at the site of Zamzam. It was cut up there and its meat was taken away. A crow came and landed in the offal and pecked at the ant hill, so 'Abd al-

Muttalib began to dig there. Quraysh came to him and said t
al-Muttalib, "What are you doing? We have never thought of
as ignorant. Why are you digging in our mosque?"

'Abd al-Muttalib said, "I am digging this well and will fight anyone who tries to stop me." He and his son al-Harith, who at that time was his only son, continued to dig. Some people of Quraysh went to them and grappled with them and fought them while others told him not to continue because of what they knew of his noble lineage and truthfulness.

When he was finally able to dig in spite of the intense opposition, he vowed that if he were given ten sons he would sacrifice one of them. He dug until he reached the swords buried in Zamzam. When Quraysh saw this they said to 'Abd al-Muttalib, "Give us a share of what you have found." 'Abd al-Muttalib said, "No, these swords belong to the House of Allah." Then he dug until he reached water, digging out the bottom so that that there was always water in it. Then he built a tank at the top of the well and he and his son filled the tank so that pilgrims could drink from it. Some envious people of Quraysh broke the tank during the night and 'Abd al-Muttalib repaired it in the morning.

When they had done this several times, 'Abd al-Muttalib prayed to his Lord and was told in a dream that if he said: 'O Allah, I will not allow it to be used for washing but it is lawful for drinking and refreshment,' he would be spared from their mischief. So 'Abd al-Muttalib stood up when Quraysh were gathered in the mosque and told them his dream and left. After that, if any of Quraysh damaged it they immediately fell ill; so they left his tank alone and allowed him to give water.

According to 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, 'Abd al-Muttalib said, "I was asleep in the *Hijr* when someone came to me and said, 'Dig Tiba.' Then I asked, 'What is Tiba?' but he left me. The following day when I went to bed again and slept, he came to me and said, 'Dig Barra.' I asked, 'What is Barra?' but he left me. The following day, when I again went to bed and slept, he came to me and said, 'Dig al-Madnuna.' I asked, 'What is Madnuna?' but once more he left me. The following day when I again went to bed and slept, he came to me and said, 'Dig

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Zamzam.' I asked, 'What is Zamzam?' He said, 'It will not run out and it will not go dry. It will water the pilgrims. It lies between the dung and blood at the place where a red-billed crow pecks at the ant hill.'"

When the place was clear to him and he knew its whereabouts and that it was a true dream, he took his pickaxe and went with his son al-Harith, who was his only son at that time, and started digging. When 'Abd al-Muttalib found the traces of the well, he said, "Allah is greater!" Then Quraysh knew that he had achieved his objective and they went to him and said, "'Abd al-Muttalib, this is the well of our father Isma'il. We also have a right to it. Let us share it with you."

He said, "I will not do that. It is something which has been given specifically to me, not to you. Of all of you I was the one to be given it." They said, "Be fair to us! We will not leave until we have been granted a legal decision against you." He said, "Appoint anyone you like as an arbiter between us." "What about the priestess of the Banu Sa'd ibn Huzaym?" they asked. He said, "Yes, I agree." She lived near the border with Syria.

So 'Abd al-Muttalib set out with a group of the Banu Umayya and a group of men from each clan of Quraysh went with them. The land was all desert at that time, and when they reached an area of desert between the Hijaz and Syria, the water of 'Abdu'l-Muttalib and his companions ran out and they thought that they were going to die of thirst. They asked for water from the other clans of Quraysh who were accompanying them but they refused, saying, "We are in a desert where we are afraid that the same thing that has happened to you might happen to us."

When 'Abd al-Muttalib saw what the people had done and was afraid for himself and his companions, he said, 'What do you think we should do?" They said, "We think we should follow your opinion. Just tell us what to do."

He said, "I think that each of us should dig a hole for himself with the strength he has left. If a man dies, his companions can bury him in his hole. Then they will bury him until there is only one man left. The neglect of one man is better than the neglect of the entire group."

They said, "We hear your command." So each of them dug his hole and then sat down waiting to die of thirst. Then 'Abd al-Muttalib said to his companions, "By Allah, to surrender ourselves to death like this is weakness. We should seek a way out for ourselves. Perhaps Allah will provide us with water from some place. Let us set off." So they prepared to depart while the rest of the Quraysh who were with them looked at them to see what they were doing. 'Abd al-Muttalib went to his mount and mounted. When it got up, a spring of sweet water gushed forth from under its feet. 'Abdu'l-Muttalib exclaimed, "Allah is greater!" and his companions said the same. Then he dismounted and drank and they drank too. They took water until their water-skins were full. He then called the clans of Quraysh who were with them and said, "Come to the water which Allah Almighty has given us." They drank and took water. The tribes who had disputed with him said, "Allah has decided for you against us, 'Abd al-Muttalib. By Allah, we will not dispute with you about Zamzam any more. Return to your task of providing water in peace." So he returned, and so did they, without consulting the priestess; and they abandoned their dispute with him about Zamzam.

The Messenger's love of drinking Zamzam water

Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both him and his father, said, "I gave the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, some water from Zamzam and he drank it while standing." (Bukhari) Elsewhere we find: "The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, drank from a bucket of Zamzam water while standing." (Ibn Khuzayma) Ibn Battal and others infer from this *hadith* that al-Bukhari meant that drinking Zamzam water was one of the *sunnas* of the *Hajj*.

Jabir ibn 'Abdullah, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, went to the House on the Day of Sacrifice and went to the Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib who were supplying water at Zamzam and said, 'Draw water, Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib. Were it not that people would take from you the right to give water, I would draw it with you.' They handed him a bucket and he drank from it." (Muslim)

Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both him and his father, said, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, went to the watering-place and asked for water. Al-'Abbas said, 'Fadl, go to your mother and bring the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, something to drink.' The Messenger of Allah said, 'Let me drink.' Al-'Abbas said, 'Messenger of Allah, they are putting their hands in it!' The Messenger of Allah said, 'Let me drink.' He drank from it and then went to Zamzam while some people were giving water and others working to get it. He said, 'Carry on working. You are doing a righteous action.' Then he said, 'If it were not that you would be overcome, I would have come down myself and put the rope on this,' and he pointed to his shoulder." (al-Bukhari)

Imam ibn Khuzayma, may Allah have mercy on him, has a chapter on this subject entitled: "The Chapter of the Recommendation to ask for Zamzam water" since the Prophet stated that it is a righteous action and declared that if it had not been that supplying water would then have been taken from the Banu 'Abd al-Muttalib, he would have drawn water with them himself.

'Abd Manaf used to carry water in skins to Makka and pour them into a basin made of hide in the courtyard of the Ka'ba for the pilgrims. Then his son Hashim did the same after him, as did 'Abd al-Muttalib. When he dug Zamzam, he brought raisins and soaked them in Zamzam water and let people drink that.

Then after 'Abd al-Muttalib his son al-'Abbas took charge of supplying water, even though he was the youngest of his brothers at that time, and it remained in his control until the coming of Islam while he was still in charge of it. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, confirmed his right over it; and it has remained with the descendants of al-'Abbas down to the present time.

At-Tabari and al-Fahiki that as-Sa'ib al-Makhzumi used to say, "Drink from the water supply of al-'Abbas. It is part of the *Sunna*."

Al-Fadl was the son of al-'Abbas and the brother of 'Abdullah. His mother was Umm al-Fadl Lubaba bint al-Harith al-Hilaliyya. She was also 'Abdullah's mother.

The words in the *hadith* quoted above, "They are putting their hands in it", meant that al-'Abbas wanted to show respect for the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, by not letting him drink from water which had been dirtied by people's hands. This came from his love for the Prophet.

In the variant related by at-Tabarani, al-'Abbas said to him, "This has been sullied. Should I not supply you with water from our houses?" He said, "No, give me the water that the people drink." This is part of his perfect humility, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

Someone has said that the words, "If it were not that you would be overcome," mean: "If it were not that governors would take it from you, being eager to obtain this honour."

Ibn Hajar said, "It is clear that this means: 'Were it not that people would overpower you by their numbers to perform this action when they saw me doing it, out of their desire to imitate me, I would have done it.'"

Ibn Baziza said, "He meant to confine the duty of supplying water to them, and that others should not share with them in it."

There are many lessons in this *hadith*. One is that it is not disliked to ask someone else for water. Nor is it wrong to refuse an offered honour if its acceptance would deprive one of something more beneficial: for in the present case the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, refused what al-'Abbas offered for the benefit of the humility inherent in drinking what other people drank. It encourages the drinking of water, particularly Zamzam water. It shows the humility of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and how he encouraged his Companions to imitate him. It also shows that things are basically pure since he, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, drank water in which many people had placed their hands.

The Prophet encouraging others to drink Zamzam water

Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him, reported that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "The best water on the face of earth is the water of Zamzam. It contains food to satisfy hunger and healing for illness. The worst water on the face of the earth is the water at Wadi Barhut in Hadramawt, which is like locusts compared with other pests. It gushes in the morning and is dry by the evening." (at-Tabarani)

Professor Khalil Hiras says in his commentary on this *hadith:* "'Best' means having the most blessing and most benefit. 'The water of Zamzam' is the blessed well which Jibril, peace be upon him, dug with his heel for Isma'il and his mother, peace be upon both of them, when the Friend of Allah, Ibrahim, left them in that desolate valley where there was neither vegetation nor water. That happened when the provisions and water they had with them ran out and Hajar ran and searched and became exhausted as she ran between Safa and Marwa looking for someone to help them. When she despaired of finding anyone, she asked Allah Almighty for help."

"Food to satisfy hunger" means that you feel full after drinking in the same way that you do after eating food. "Healing for illness" means that it removes illness and cures disease.

"The worst water on the face of the earth" means that which has the least blessing and is most likely to produce illness, and the least thirst-quenching.

Ibn Jurayj said that he heard it said that "The best water on earth is the water of Zamzam. The worst water on earth is the water of Barhut, a ravine in Hadramawt. The best places on earth are mosques and the worst places on earth are markets."

Sa'id ibn Mansur related in his *Sunan* that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "The best well of mankind is Zamzam. The best valleys of mankind are the valley of Makka and a valley in India where Adam, peace be upon him, is buried."

Ibn Abi Mukayka said, "I was with Ibn 'Abbas when a man came and sat down beside him. Ibn 'Abbas said to him, "Where have you come from?" He replied, "I have been drinking Zamzam water." He said, "Did you drink it in the proper way?" The man asked, "What is the proper way, Ibn 'Abbas?" He said, "To face the *qibla*, say the Name of Allah and then drink. You should take three breaths. When you finish, you should praise Allah Almighty and be completely satisfied by it. I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, say: 'A sign of the difference between us and the hypocrites is that they are not satisfied by Zamzam.'" (Ibn Maja)

The Love of the Early Muslims for Zamzam

We have seen how the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, loved drinking Zamzam water. After him, the righteous early Muslims recommended that those who came to the Sacred Land of Allah and entered His House should not leave without drinking Zamzam water.

Ibn Abi Shayba reported from Shibr ibn al-Mufaddal that 'Abdullah ibn Khaytham said, "I was with Sa'id ibn Jubayr and he went up to a basin which contained Zamzam water and scooped some up with his hand and drank it." Ibn Abi Shayba reported from Wukay' from Sufyan that Mujahid said, "Every time they left the House, they used to like to go to Zamzam and drink from it." It is mentioned from Muhammad ibn Abi 'Adi that Humayd ibn Bakr said, "It is recommended for a man to drink Zamzam water if he can and to ask for it." It is mentioned from 'Amr ibn Dinar that Ibn 'Abbas drank from Zamzam, taking a bucket from it; he then faced the *qibla* and drank twice until he was full, and then he said, "A hypocrite is not satisfied by it."

One of the virtues of Zamzam water is that it satisfies those who drink it and gives nourishment, which is a quality no other water possesses. The virtues of Zamzam water are that it alleviates internal illnesses, sates hunger, and quenches thirst.

It is recounted that Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both him and his father, said one day, "No man drinks his fill of the water of Zamzam without Allah thereby remedying any internal illness he has. Anyone who drinks it because of thirst is quenched by it and anyone who drinks it when hungry is satisfied." Mujahid related that Ibn 'Abbas said, "When a guest visits, give him Zamzam water. Giving people Zamzam water is the same as giving them food."

Another distinguishing feature of Zamzam water is that it is recommended to take leave of the House by drinking it. Mujahid said, "When people took leave of the House, they used to recommend going to Zamzam and drinking from it."

The Washing of the Prophet's Heart with Zamzam Water

Abu Dharr, may Allah be pleased with him, related that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said: "During the time that I was in Makka, the roof of my house was opened and Jibril descended and opened up my chest, washing it with Zamzam water. Then he brought a gold basin filled with wisdom and faith which he poured into my breast and then closed it. Then he took my hand and took me up to the lowest heaven."

The fact that Zamzam water was chosen to wash out the Prophet's breast shows the superiority of Zamzam water to all other water.

According to Ibn Abi Jamra, "The water of the Garden was not used because Zamzam water has its origin in water from the Garden which was then sent to the earth. By using it Allah showed that he desired the blessing of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, to remain on the earth."

As-Suhayli said: "Since Zamzam came from the footprint of Jibril, the Spirit of Purity, to the mother of Isma'il, the forefather of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, it was appropriate for him to be washed with its water when he was about to enter the Presence of Purity and have intimate converse with his Lord."

As for the gold basin referred to, a basin is the usual vessel used for washing and gold is the finest and purest of raw materials and has special qualities which other substances do not have. It is not destoyed by either fire or earth nor does it rust. It is the heaviest of precious metals and in this respect resembles the weight of Revelation.

This *hadith* makes it clear without any doubt that the water of Zamzam is superior to all other waters.

Healing with Zamzam water

'A'isha, may Allah be pleased with her, said, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, used to carry Zamzam water in containers and skins and would pour it on the sick and have them drink it."

This *hadith* clearly states the recommendation to transport Zamzam water away from Makka and makes clear to us how to use it as a means of treatment.

The sick person for whom healing is desired should be brought Zamzam water which should first be poured over him with the intention that Allah may heal him of his illness. Then he should drink as much of it as possible.

Here I remind my fellow Muslims that the effect of this water will only be felt by those who believe the *hadith* of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and are certain that Allah Almighty has made Zamzam water a means of healing. It should not be used experimentally to see if it will be successful or not. If used in that way it is likely to have the opposite effect. This is not the state of the people of belief. Their state is certainty of heart and sincere belief that they will receive healing through it.

The treatment of fever

Abu Jamra ad-Dab'i said, "I was sitting with Ibn 'Abbas in Makka and was overcome by fever. He said, 'Cool yourself with Zamzam water. The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Fever comes from the blast of Jahannam. Cool it with water," or he said, "with Zamzam water."'" (al-Bukhari)

Asma' bint Abi Bakr used to pour Zamzam water on the body and clothes of people suffering from a fever.

Ibn Hajar said, "There is disagreement about the meaning of the Prophet's ascription of fever to Jahannam. Some say that it is literal and that the heat which reaches the bodies of people with fever actually comes from Jahannam and Allah has decreed for it to appear with all the causes that make that possible so that people will reflect on that, in the same way that certain types of joy and pleasure are literally part of the bliss of the Garden which become manifest in this world as a lesson and indication.

"However, it is also said that the tradition is metaphorical and that the meaning is that the heat of fever resembles the heat of Jahannam as a way of indicating to people the intensity of the heat of the Fire. The intense heat they feel resembles the heat-blast of Jahannam and the heat they will feel from proximity to it."

The treatment of headaches:

Al-Azraqi related in his Book, *The History of Makka*, that ad-Dahhak ibn Muzahim said, "I have heard that filling oneself with Zamzam water is a cure for hypocrisy, that its water cures headaches, that looking into it clears the sight, and that a time will come when it will be sweeter than the water of the Nile and the Euphrates."

How many people afflicted with headaches have gone to the well of Zamzam and drunk from it with the intention of being healed and have been healed. Indeed, this is hardly surprising because the water of Zamzam truly is for that for which it is drunk. Is the water of Zamzam not food for hunger and healing for illness? An African Muslim once told me, swearing by the Lord of the Universe, that he had been troubled by a severe ailment in his mouth for several years. When he went to Zamzam water and drank it with the intention of obtaining healing, Allah Almighty healed him.

As Wahb ibn Munabbah said of Zamzam, "By the One Who has the soul of Wahb in His Hand, it is in the Book of Allah that it

is food for hunger and healing for illness. By One who has the soul of Wahb in His hand, no one goes to it and drinks from it until he is full without that removing his illness and bringing him healing." And the great Companion Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both him and his father, mentioned this healing and blessing for our benefit when he said, "There is treatment in it for every illness."

Regarding the words, "a time will come when it is sweeter than the Nile and Euphrates," Abu Muhammad al-Khuza'i said, "In 281 AH, after much rain had fallen on Makka and its valleys had been badly flooded in the years 279 and 280, the water of Zamzam rose nearly to the top of the well, so that there was only about seven cubits between its surface and the parapet. I had never seen seen it that full nor heard of anyone else mentioning that he had seen it that full. It was so sweet that its water was the sweetest water drunk by the people of Makka, and I and many of the people of Makka preferred it to any other because of its sweetness, finding it sweeter than spring water. I did not hear any of the shaykhs mention that he had ever known it that sweet."

"The Water of Zamzam is for that for which it is drunk"

Jabir, Ibn 'Abbas, Ibn 'Amr and Mu'awiya all related that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "The water of Zamzam is for that for which it is drunk." The people of knowledge have many comments on this *hadith* and speak about its meaning.

It is said that the source of the words, "for that for which it is drunk," is the fact that Allah provided the water of Zamzam to fulfil the need of the child of His Friend, Isma'il son of Ibrahim, and so it continues to fulfil the needs of those after him. Therefore, whoever drinks it with sincerity finds his need fulfilled. Many people have drunk from it with a particular object in mind which was subsequently obtained by them.

The author of *al-'Iqd ath-Thamin* mentioned that Ahmad ibn 'Abdullah ash-Sharifi mentioned that a house-boy in the Haram of Makka drank Zamzam water in order to be healed of blindness and was healed according to what he was told by his shaykh, the *mufti* 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn Abi'l-Khayr al-Fasi.

Imam an-Nawawi said about this *hadith*, "It means that whoever drinks it to obtain something he needs will do so. The scholars and righteous have experienced this regarding their needs in both this world and the Next and have obtained them by the blessing and bounty of Allah Almighty."

Perhaps the best explanation of the meaning the *hadith* is that given by the Tabi'i, Mujahid: "If you drink Zamzam water seeking healing by it, Allah will heal you. If you drink Zamzam water seeking to satisfy your hunger, Allah will satisfy you with it. If you drink Zamzam water to satisfy your thirst, Allah will satisfy it."

Ibn al-Qayyim said, "I and many others have experienced the wonders of the healing of Zamzam water and I have used it to heal a number of illnesses which were healed by the permission of Allah. I saw someone who was nourished by it for days, a fortnight or more, without feeling hungry. He performed *tawaf* with everyone else. He told me that he could have continued doing that for forty days. He had the strength to have sexual intercourse with his wife and fast and perform *tawaf* several times."

When you drink Zamzam water, you should face the *qibla* and mention the Name of Allah, take three breaths and drink your fill. When you finish, praise Allah and say with sincerity and certainty: "O Allah, I ask You for useful knowledge, a fearful heart and an answered supplication. O Allah, I ask You for all good, sooner and later, what I know of it and what I do not know. I seek refuge in You from all evil, sooner and later, what I know of it and what I do not know."

Ash-Shawkani said in commenting on this noble *hadith*: "It contains an indication that Zamzam water benefits those who drink it for a specific aim by giving them whatever they drink it for, whether it is something of this world or the Next, because the word "what" in the *hadith* bears a general meaning." People of weak faith have expressed doubts as to whether the basis of the report is well-founded, since the people of Makka continue to require food and are not satisfied by the water of Zamzam and there are many illnesses among them which require treatment and some of them remain ill, a situation which existed both during the time of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, and afterwards. Ash-Shawkani refuted them by saying, "The words apply, and Allah knows best, to someone with a need who is sincere in his belief and his turning to his Almighty Lord."

Drinking Zamzam water as a protection against the thirst of the Day of Resurrection

"The water of Zamzam water is for that for which it is drunk," and so anyone who drinks it with the object of having his thirst

quenched on the Day of the Greatest Thirst, on the Day of Rising, will obtain his desire by the bounty and grace of Allah.

Al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abbad said that he heard Suwayd ibn Sa'id say, "I saw 'Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak in Makka. He went to Zamzam and asked for some water. Then he faced the *qibla* and declared: 'O Allah, Ibn Abi'l-Mawwal related to me from Muhammad ibn al-Munkadir from Jabir that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "The water of Zamzam is for that for which is drunk." I am drinking this for the thirst of the Resurrection.' Then he drank it."

Drinking Zamzam water with the intention of being healed

We made have it absolutely clear above how the water of Zamzam is a cure and healing but how, in order to achieve such healing, we must have the strong intention of being healed and trust in the words of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. Several of the pious Companions drank from Zamzam water with the intention of being healed.

Al-Fakihi transmitted through Ibn Ishaq that 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr said, "Mu'awiya went on *Hajj* and we performed it with him. After performing *tawaf* of the House, he prayed two *rak'ats* at the Maqam and then passed by Zamzam as he was going out to Safa and said, 'Bring me a bucket of it, boy.' The boy brought him a bucket and he drank and poured some on his face and head. Mu'awiya said, 'Zamzam is healing. It is for that for which it is drunk.'"

Drinking Zamzam water out of the desire for knowledge

Many a man of knowledge has obtained knowledge and had his memory improved after drinking from Zamzam with the intention

of gaining knowledge, and many a *faqih* has had his heart expanded by Allah after drinking Zamzam water with the intention of obtaining greater understanding of Allah's *deen*.

Al-Hakim mentioned that Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ja'far told him that Ibn Khuzayma was asked, "From where did you obtain knowledge?" He replied, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, 'The water of Zamzam is for that for which it is drunk.' I have what I drank it for. I asked Allah for useful knowledge."

It might well be asked what the connection is between Zamzam water and a clear memory, or between Zamzam water and intelligent understanding. The connection is absolutely clear for anyone with a clear and unveiled heart. The water of Zamzam is for that for which it is drunk, taking into account a person's devotion to undertaking the means at his disposal to gain his objective.

Jalal ad-din as-Suyuti reports about himself: "Allah Almighty be praised, I travelled to Syria, the Hijaz, Yemen, India, Morocco and Takrur, and when I went on *Hajj* I drank Zamzam water for several things, including that in *fiqh* I should reach the degree of Shaykh Siraj ad-din al-Balqini and in *hadith* the rank of Ibn Hajar. I mention this only to speak about the blessing of Allah Almighty to me. It is no boast. What can anyone hope to obtain in this world by boasting when his need is great and his hair has gone white and the best part of his life is over?"

Drinking Zamzam water for the *hadiths* of the Messenger of Allah

One of the intentions which all who drink Zamzam water should have is that of listening to the *hadiths* of the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, memorising them and understanding them. Al-Humaydi, the shaykh of al-Bukhari, related this excellent report: "We were with Ibn 'Ajiba when he related to us the *hadith*: 'The water of Zamzam is for that for which it is drunk.' A man got up and left the assembly and then came back.

He asked, 'Abu Muhammad, was the *hadith* which you reported to us about Zamzam sound?' He said, 'Yes.' The man said, 'Just now I drank a bucket of Zamzam with the aim of your relating a hundred *hadiths* to me!' Ibn 'Ajiba said, 'Sit.' The man sat down, and he related a hundred *hadiths* to him."

The Water of Zamzam satisfying hunger

Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him and his father, said, "We used to call Zamzam '*Shuba'a*' (Repletion), and we used to find in it the best support for those dependent on us."

Shuba'a means that Zamzam water both quenches the thirst and satisfies the hunger of those who drink it in the same way that water normally quenches thirst and food satisfies hunger. It is as if Zamzam water combined the two qualities of quenching thirst and satisfying hunger. That is why someone with dependants would resort to it when he could not obtain enough food for his children. This is one of the special qualities of Zamzam water and one of its never-ending blessings.

This particular quality was experienced by the Companion Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, may Allah be pleased with him. Abu Dharr says this when recounting how he became Muslim and met the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace:

> "I went to Zamzam and washed the blood from myself and drank its water. I remained, nephew, for thirty days and nights with no food except Zamzam water. I became so plump that the folds of my belly were doubled in size and I never felt any pangs of hunger."
>
> The Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, asked Abu Dharr, "How long have you been here?" He replied, "I have been here for thirty days and nights." He said, 'Who fed you?" He answered "I have had no food but Zamzam water and yet I have become so full that the folds of my belly have doubled in size and I have not felt any pangs of hunger inside me." He replied, "It is blessed. It is food for hunger."

This means that Zamzam water satisfies the hunger of anyone who drinks it in the same way that food would satisfy him. Allah the All-Glorious has made this water take the place of food. Otherwise how could Hajar and her son have survived in this valley which Allah described as being barren and *"without vegetation"*?

This is one of the secrets of Allah with which He has endowed this water. Researchers and scientists have studied it and analysed its contents and attempted to produce water similar to the water of Zamzam in all its qualities but their attempts have proved fruitless. They have admitted their incapacity and said, "There is no Zamzam except what comes from Zamzam!" The water of Zamzam truly is one of the signs of Allah in His creation.

Individual Experiences of Zamzam Water

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said: "The water of Zamzam is for that for which it is drunk. If you drink it seeking healing, Allah will heal you. If you drink it to become full, Allah will fill you. If you drink it to prevent hunger, it will be prevented. It is 'the Kick of Jibril' and the water Allah gave Isma'il."

This statement is not to be taken unreservedly but is conditional. Ibn 'Arabi says, "This quality will exist in it until the Day of Rising for all who have a sound intention and complete conviction and do not drink it as an experiment. Allah is with those who have trust. It disgraces experimenters."

Al-Hakim at-Tirmidhi

Al-Hakim at-Tirmidhi said this about a person who drinks Zamzam. "If he drinks to be sated, Allah will sate him. If he drinks it to quench his thirst, Allah will quench it. If he drinks it for healing, Allah will heal him. If he drinks it to rectify a bad quality, Allah will make it good. If he drinks on account of the constriction of his breast, Allah will expand it. If he drinks it to remove the darkness in his heart, Allah will remove it. If he drinks it for something he needs, Allah will fulfil that need. If he drinks it on account of something that has befallen him, Allah will suffice him in it. If he drinks it on account of a calamity, Allah will remove it. If he drinks it for help, Allah will help him. For whatever good or righteous intention he drinks it, Allah will fulfil that intention because he is seeking help by means of something Allah Almighty

sent down from His Garden as succour. All that is based on the strength of the drinker's belief, intention and predisposition, the strength of his trust in his Lord, and the firmness of his heart."

Al-Hakim at-Tirmidhi also says, "I began to perform *tawaf* on a dark night and was distracted by the urge to urinate. The pressure was so intense that it hurt. I was afraid to leave the mosque for fear of treading on people since it was in the time of the *Hajj*. Then I remembered this *hadith* and went to Zamzam and drank my fill, and that urge left me until morning came."

Imam Sufyan ath-Thawri

Ibn al-Jawzi mentioned in his book, *Stimulation of the Dweller's Desire to Visit the Noblest of Places*, that 'Abdu'r-Rahman ibn Ya'qub said: "One of the shaykhs of Herat called Abu 'Abdullah came to us and he was a truthful man. He told me, 'I entered the mosque before dawn and sat beside Zamzam. There was a shaykh who had entered by the Zamzam gate with his garment concealing his face. He went to the well and pulled up a bucket. He drank and I took his leftovers and drank them. They tasted like almond paste and I have never tasted anything better. Then I turned round and the shaykh had gone.

"I went the next morning before dawn and sat beside Zamzam. Then the same shaykh entered by the Zamzam gate and went to the well and pulled up a bucket and drank. I took his leftovers and drank them. They tasted like milk mixed with honey and I have never tasted anything better. Then I turned round and the shaykh had gone.

"Then I returned the following morning before dawn and sat beside Zamzam. The same shaykh again entered by the Zamzam gate and pulled up a bucket and drank. I took his leftovers and drank them. They tasted like sugar mixed with honey and I have never tasted anything better. I grasped his hand and said to him, 'O Shaykh, by the right of this building on you, who are you?' 'Will you keep my identity secret?' he asked. I said, 'Yes.' 'Until I am

dead?' he asked. I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'I am Sufyan ibn Sa'id ath-Thawri.'"

Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya

Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya said, "Zamzam water is the finest and noblest of waters, most esteemed and beloved, most precious and cherished by people. It is 'the Kick of Jibril' and the water Allah gave Isma'il. I and many others have experienced the wonders of the healing of Zamzam water and I have used it to heal a number of illnesses which were healed by the permission of Allah. I saw someone who was nourished by it for days, a fortnight or more, without feeling hungry. He performed *tawaf* with everyone else. He told me that he could have continued doing that for forty days. He had the strength to have sexual intercourse with his wife and fast and perform *tawaf* several times."

Ibn Qayyim also said, "Once it happened to me in Makka that I became ill and had neither doctor or medicine. I used the *Fatiha* of the Book to treat myself. I took some Zamzam water, recited the *Fatiha* over it several times, and then drank it. I experienced a complete cure through that and then I began to rely on it in many illnesses and had full benefit from it."

The Sage of the Community, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas

'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him and his father, said, "Pray in the prayer-place of the good and drink the water of the pious." He was asked, "What is the prayer-place of the good?" He replied, "Under the *Mizab* (the water-spout of the Ka'ba)." He was asked, "What is the water of the pious?" He said, "It is Zamzam which is honoured above every other drink."

Ibn Abi Mulayka said, "I was with Ibn 'Abbas when a man came and sat down beside him. Ibn 'Abbas asked him, "Where have you come from?" He replied, "I have been drinking Zamzam water." He said, "Did you drink it in the proper way?" The man

asked, "What is the proper way, Ibn 'Abbas?" He replied, "To face the *qibla*, say the Name of Allah and then drink. You should take three breaths. When you finish, you should praise Allah Almighty and be completely satisfied by it. I heard the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, say, 'A sign of the difference between us and the hypocrites is that they are not satisfied by Zamzam.'"

When he, may Allah be pleased with him, drank Zamzam water, he used to say, "O Allah, I ask You for useful knowledge, ample provision, and healing from every illness."

Ibn 'Abbas was so renowned for his knowledge that he was called the "Interpreter of the Qur'an." He was also called "The Ocean" on account of his great knowledge. He received immense provision from Allah and only became ill when he was old. That was partly due to the blessings of Zamzam.

The Miraculous Healing Power of Zamzam Water

The Wise Lawgiver commanded us to seek treatment when we are ill. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said: "Every illness has a cure. When the cure for the illness is found, it may be healed by the permission of Allah Almighty."

Imam Ahmad related as follows from Usama ibn Sharik: "I was with the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, when some bedouins came and said, 'Yes, slaves of Allah, seek treatment. Allah Almighty has not sent down a disease without sending down a cure for it, except for one disease.' They asked, 'What is that?' He replied, 'Old age.'"

The command to seek treatment is not contrary to reliance on Allah, just as averting hunger, thirst, heat and cold by their opposites is not contrary to it.

Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya said: "The realisation of *tawhid* is only complete when it takes directly into account the means which Allah has set up in creation, according to the quantity and quality of their causative factors. Declaring them inoperative actually detracts from reliance, as well as being a denial of common sense. It is a weakness in that the one who dispenses with them thinks that abandoning them makes for stronger reliance. However, the reality of reliance is the reliance of the heart on Allah in respect of you obtaining what will benefit you in your *deen* and this world and avoiding what will harm you in your *deen* and this world. The existence of causation is indispensable from the point of view of common sense and the *Shari'a*.

"Moreover, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, informed us that Allah has sent down a remedy for every

illness. However, doctors can make mistakes in identifying the disease and also fail to prescribe the correct remedy. That is why he said, may Allah bless him and grant him peace: "Allah Almighty has not sent down a disease without sending down a cure for it. Whoever knows it knows it and whoever does not know it does not know it."

Ibn Qayyim also said, "There are remedies for illnesses to which the intellects of the great doctors have not been guided and which their sciences, experiments and deductions have not uncovered, such as the remedies of the heart and spirit: the strength of the heart and its reliance on and trust in Allah, seeking refuge in Allah, being cast down and contrite before Allah and humble towards Him, truthfulness, supplication, repentance and asking forgiveness, charity to other creatures, helping people who are troubled, and relieving those in distress. Nations with different religions and creeds have tried these remedies and found that they have an effect in healing which cannot be obtained by the most knowledgeable of doctors for all his experiments or deductions."

We and others have experienced many instances of this spiritual healing power and have seen it accomplish things which physical remedies could not achieve. This happens when the heart is connected to the Lord of the universe, the Creator of both the illness and the cure, the Director of nature and the One Who does whatever He wills. He has other remedies than the remedies used by those whose hearts are far from Him and turned away from Him.

It is known that when the spirit is strong it helps to avert illness and aids recovery from it. Someone with spiritual strength who delights in his nearness to his Creator, feels close to Him and loves Him, delights in remembering Him and directing all his faculties towards Him and concentrating them on Him, and seeks help from Him and relies on Him, finds that to be the greatest of remedies for any illness he has. This is not denied except by the most ignorant of people, those with the blindest hearts and most opaque intellects, those furthest from Allah and the reality of human potential.

Relating this to Zamzam water, there are many cases of illness in which all doctors have been confused and bewildered and at

times despairing and the only cure has been found in Zamzam water.

Zamzam Water curing cancer

This account was recorded by a Moroccan woman called Layla al-Halu in a book entitled *Do Not Forget Allah*. The magazine *al-'Arabiyya* published parts of it in issue 147, as did *al-Muslimun* in issue 22 (19-25 Shawwal 1405 AH/6-12 July 1985). Dr. al-Mahdi ibn 'Ubud wrote a preface to the book in which he said:

> "This is a case which should open the eyes and hearts of people of sound intellect. Similar instances have occurred and other instances like it will occur again because the fact is that with Zamzam man's innate spiritual power is supported by a power which emanates from the Unseen World which is in the Hands of Allah. The Unseen World is much vaster than the visible world."

Layla al-Halu was extremely ill and doctors had given her up for lost; drugs were not even able to relieve her pain. In Paris she was told, "We must unfortunately inform you that the cancer has spread throughout your entire chest and you will not live longer than three months. There is no remedy for cancer when it reaches this stage."

Having heard the report diagnosing her condition and telling her that there was no point in having treatment, there was nothing left for Layla al-Halu to do other than bid farewell to her family and spend the rest of her days waiting for her death. However, before returning to Morocco, her husband suggested to her that she go to Makka to perform *'umra*. Layla al-Halu says in her book:

> "I went into retreat in the House of Allah and constantly drank Zamzam water and confined myself to eating a loaf of bread and one egg every day. My days passed in prayer, recitation of the Noble Qur'an and supplication. There were four days in which I did not know night from day and I recited the Qur'an from beginning to end. I prostrated long in my prayers, weeping bitterly for the good actions I had neglected and for the obligations I had missed.
>
> "After some days I felt that the terrible pains which used to wrack my body had grown less and I was sure that something had happened so I decided to return to Paris to consult the doctors again."

The doctors there were astonished at what they found and made several tests before they could believe the extraordinary fact by which they were confronted. A short time earlier they had informed her that the cancer had spread to every part of her chest and now there was no trace of the cancer at all! This actually happened! Layla al-Halu returned to Morocco and wrote down the account of how she was cured of cancer after drinking Zamzam water.

However, after she had been in Morocco for some time the pains recurred a second time and she entered hospital, had an operation and was treated with chemotherapy. Her hair fell out and a beard grew on her chin and she became emaciated. When all agreed to wait for her death, a second miracle occurred. Madame Layla al-Halu recounts:

> "While sleeping I saw a light shining so brightly that it dazzled me and I was certain that it was the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. I told him the story of my illness and my struggle and my belief and I also told him that I was yearning to meet him. He listened with great concern. When I finished what I had to say, he took his noble hand and stroked my head with it from left to right and told me to be steadfast and that only good would befall me. Then he pressed down hard on the top of my head so that I woke up.
>
> "The hand of the chosen one, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, had touched my bald head and he had

spoken to me in a voice which was nothing but mercy and compassion: 'Do not worry and do not be alarmed. Be patient. By Allah, only good will befall you."'

Layla al-Halu was restored to health and the cancer finally abated. She ends her tale:

> "There is a hidden strength which the mind cannot perceive. It is the strength of Allah and as long as this strength remains with you, it fills your life with hope because Allah is with you and the doors of Heaven are opened constantly to you. Your elevation on earth only comes from following Allah. So do not forget Allah!"

After publishing part of the book of Layla al-Halu, the magazine *al-Muslimun* gives the opinions of some eminent scientists who have read her book.

Dr. Khalid, the head of the Department of *Fiqh* associated with the College of Shari'a and Islamic Studies in the University of Kuwait, comments on the story of the Moroccan lady:

> "Certain *hadiths* are related from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, regarding the excellence of Zamzam water. One of them is that he said, 'If you drink Zamzam water seeking healing by it, Allah will heal you. If you drink Zamzam water seeking to satisfy your hunger, Allah will satisfy you by it. If you drink Zamzam water to satisfy your thirst, Allah will satisfy it.' Drinking Zamzam water depends in its effect upon sincere intention and sincere turning to Allah the All-Glorious. He alone can cure pains and illnesses as is shown by what He said on the tongue of Ibrahim, peace be upon him: *'And when I am ill, it is He Who heals me.'* (26:80) It does not mean that Zamzam water is considered to be a remedy by itself. The One Who heals is Allah Almighty.
>
> "One scientist in commenting on this said, 'The viewpoint of Islam regarding treating illness was clarified by

the Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, when he said, 'Slaves of Allah, seek treatment. Allah Almighty has not sent down a disease without sending down a cure for it. Whoever knows it, knows it. Whoever does not know it, does not know it - except for one disease, which is old age.'

'This *hadith* makes it clear to us that nothing is difficult or impossible for Allah Almighty. Even if something might be incurable for human beings, Allah is able to cure any illness, except old age which is inevitable. Mankind cannot reverse the process of ageing. This Moroccan lady who was told by the doctors that there was no treatment for the cancer she was suffering from went to the House of Allah with a sincere intention and drank Zamzam water. The will of Allah Almighty desired this pure water to act on this illness and cure it. This is not difficult for Allah. The Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, says, 'Those who perform *'Umra* and *Hajj* are visitors of Allah. If they ask of Him, He gives to them. If they call on Him, He answers them.' Let us imagine that a visitor of Allah Almighty experiences pains and is suffering from illness and is in need of Allah. Would He turn that person away when He is the Strong, the Powerful and Generous?

"When this woman went to the House of Allah and drank Zamzam water she experienced healing for her illness, and this is neither unlikely nor impossible. The Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, says in a *hadith*: 'If they ask of Him, He gives to them. If they call on Him, He answers them.' When this lady drank Zamzam water, she asked Allah to heal her and called on Him. She found that her supplication was accepted and answered because she called on Him with sincerity, in her stricken and afflicted state. The Messenger, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, taught us to call on Allah when we drink Zamzam water and say, 'O Allah, make it useful knowledge, ample provision and healing for every illness.'

"Perhaps this lady went with that intention when she felt that her end was near and the doctors had lost hope of treating her. She asked Allah to cure her and it happened that her supplication was accepted. From the point of view of the *Shari'a*, there is nothing to suggest the impossibility of this woman's being cured or any conflict with this story. In spite of their knowledge, the doctors were powerless and declared that healing was impossible. However, Allah knew full well that this woman would come later to the House and drink this water and that would be the occasion for the cure of her illness. We affirm that from our absolute firm belief in Allah and our acknowledgement of His power and immensity and that He does whatever He wills. Allah Almighty can do anything and is able to make this water a healing for any illness. The water is not in itself a medicine, but the will of Allah Almighty, and turning to Him after there is no further hope, are what gives the water its healing power.

"The case of this lady is not by any means the first. There have been numerous instances of the healing of many illnesses which took place by the will of Allah and man's trust in this will. The case here is a matter of absolute faith in Allah. He is the All-Powerful, the Preserver Who has Control over everything. The gate of His mercy is open to whoever goes to it without doubt. This is part of the effect of supplication."

The case of this Moroccan lady is a clear and sublime example of the absolute power of Allah. Cancer is an illness which requires radical surgery to stop its spread and even that is not a cure. When all other means have failed, man can only turn to Allah Almighty. When a sick person has sought all medical means and consulted doctors and is certain that they are powerless, he can only have recourse to the Creator of mankind. He alone has the power to achieve what they lack the power to achieve. They are subject to natural law. Only the One Who created this law has the power to

suspend it. Allah is He Who created the body and created the causes of illness in the form of germs, viruses and microbes. All He has to do is to order these causes to cease and they cease.

The Dimensions of the Well of Zamzam and its Springs

The civil engineer Yahya ibn Kushak says in his book, *Zamzam*:

At the beginning of 1400, I was commissioned to clean and dredge the well of Zamzam. We set up large pumps to remove all the water in the well. This gave us the opportunity to take precise measurements of it and to examine its walls and its principal sources. After pumping out the water to a level below the lowest of these sources we were able to photograph and film them. The two divers who accompanied us with the job of cleaning out the well measured the average circumference of the well as being four metres. It was clear to us that the inside walls of the well were firmly constructed to a depth of 14.80 metres from the top of the well. Below this there were two main openings from which the well is filled, one facing the Noble Ka'ba and the second facing Jiyad. Then there is a further section excavated out of the rock to a depth of 17.20 metres.

It should be noted that these measurements are close to the measurements reported in historical accounts which mostly agree that its depth from top to bottom is 40 cubits (22.50 m.) The difference between the depth of the constructed part in the present time and that mentioned in historical accounts is due to the fact that the top of the well of Zamzam has been placed lower than the Noble Ka'ba underground whereas before it was above ground.

The diameter of the well differs according to the depth and varies between 1.50 and 2 m.; the diameter where the constructed part meets the part excavated out of rock is 1.80 m. That is where the main sources of the well are located. They are built of two lines of stones, and they are as follows.

Principal source. This is the opening facing the Noble Ka'ba at the Corner opposite the Hijr of Isma'il. It is 45 cm long and 30 cm high and it has a depression inside it. The greatest amount of water comes from it. This tallies with what is reported in historical documents.

Second source. This is a large opening about 70 cm long and 30 cm high which is divided on the inside into two openings. It faces Jiyad.

Subsidiary sources: There are numerous openings between the foundation stones from which water emerges. There are five of them in the smaller gap between the two main openings and twenty-one others between the first main opening on the side of Mount Abu Qubays and Safa and Marwa and the second opening. These are not all at the same level but at different levels and water comes from them in varying amounts.

It should be noted that the historical accounts mention the existence of three springs: a spring opposite the Corner of the Black Stone, a spring opposite Abu Qubays and Safa, and a spring opposite Marwa. Yet it is clear from our inspection that there are only two main sources: one towards the Ka'ba and the other towards Jiyad. As for the third source which historical accounts mention as being in the direction of Mt Abu Qubays and Safa, instead there are those twenty-one small openings between the stones. It is possible that this source was shut off when the well of Zamzam was repaired in 1028 AH and that water from it has since made its way between the stones. Al-Ghazi mentions in his history, quoting al-Khadrawi in *The Crown of*

the Histories of Mankind, that in the month of Ramadan, 1028 AH, many stones fell into the well of Zamzam from the north and west sides. The work of repairing it was commenced on Monday, 4 Shawwal 1028 AH and completed on 16 Shawwal.

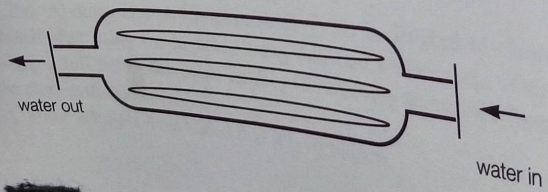
It is clear from examining the rocky part of the well of Zamzam that there are grooves carved out horizontally in the stone. Four of them are below the main source, four are between the two main sources in an area of about one metre, and twelve are in the area where the small openings are located. The depth of these grooves varies. Some of them are as much as 6 cm deep and some are superficial. It is probable that these grooves occurred as a result of the continuous descent of the waters from the sources or as a result of buckets rubbing against the stone when water was drawn from the well in buckets. Historical accounts mention that there were twelve pulleys at the mouth of the well to draw the water. Alternatively, the grooves might have been the result of both these factors.

The Sterilisation of the Water of Zamzam

Malicious individuals have raised a serious point to unsettle the Muslims and put them off drinking Zamzam water, the substance of which is that Zamzam water is not fit for drinking because it is not clean. We take this opportunity to reassure the Muslims who visit the Sacred House of Allah that they can drink Zamzam water with complete confidence that it is the best and purest water in the world.

Yahya Kushak also mentions in his book *Zamzam* that the purification of Zamzam water has now been assured by using the most modern means of purification available, ultraviolet waves, where sterilisation is accomplished by exposing the water in thin layers to ultraviolet rays generated by means of mercury tubes. These tubes are placed inside a special glass which permits the passage of the invisible rays. In order to guarantee the effectiveness of the sterilisation, the waters must be transparent, as there must be enough time and strong enough exposure of the water to the rays to kill all microbes.

The following diagram gives a clear picture of the means of operation of the ultraviolet radiation equipment.



Some of the most important features of this method include:

- the possibility of achieving sterilisation in seconds
- there being no danger of excessive treatment
- there being no effect on the natural characteristics of the water
- no chemical material entering the water

Questions About Zamzam Water

Is it permitted to transport Zamzam water?

It is permitted to transport Zamzam water. Indeed, it is recommended to do so. It is blessed water. 'A'isha, may Allah be pleased with her, said, "The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, used to carry Zamzam water in vessels and skins. He would pour it on the sick and have them drink it."

Habib ibn Abi Thabit said, "I asked 'Ata', 'Do you carry Zamzam water?' He replied, 'The Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, carried it and al-Hasan and al-Husayn carried it.'"

The Companions and righteous early Muslims, may Allah be pleased with them, used to give their guests gifts of Zamzam water.

Mujahid said that when a guest stayed with Ibn 'Abbas, may Allah be pleased with both him and his father, he gave him some Zamzam water and he did not give his guest any food before he had drunk some Zamzam water.

Is it permitted to cleanse oneself in the lavatory with Zamzam water?

Ibn 'Abddin says in his commentary: "It is disliked to clean oneself after using the lavatory using Zamzam water except when taking a full bath. The same applies to removing impurities from the clothes or body.

Some scholars have stated that it is forbidden.

Innovations and Errors Regarding Zamzam Water

Zamzam water is highly esteemed in the hearts of the Muslims. It is blessed water as the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, stated. However, some people with weak faith have taken this to excess and misled many ordinary people. They ascribe to Zamzam many superstitions and lies including, among other things:

- That a spring of the water in the Hanafi mosque in Cairo derives its water from the well of Zamzam. This lie is based on an even more atrocious one, namely that an Egyptian man went on *Hajj* and a cup fell from his hand into the well of Zamzam – and that when he returned to Cairo, he found it in that spring! This is why you see many ignorant people seeking the blessing of its water and using it for healing.

- That the well of Zamzam is a good place to die. It happened in 1326 AH that an Indian man threw himself into the well. His corpse was finally recovered after great effort and the authorities had to remove a large amount of water from the well after that.

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Zamzam, Yahya Kushak

Books of the *Sunna*

"Zamzam is the finest and noblest of all waters, most esteemed and most beloved, most precious and cherished by all mankind."

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya

ZAMZAM

The wonderful Well of Zamzam in the Holy Sanctuary of Makka, and the water which springs from it, are dear to the heart of every Muslim believer. A number of fictitious and superstitious ideas about it have appeared over the centuries, acting as a source of confusion and misguidance. Accordingly there is great need for a reliable work presenting correct and authentic traditional knowledge about Zamzam and its unique qualities.

Based solely on authoritative sources and scientific research, this book charts the history of Zamzam from its miraculous first appearance down to the most remarkable discoveries and personal experiences of recent years. The author also reveals details of the importance of Zamzam water to the Prophet himself (Allah's peace and blessings upon him) and the early Muslims, and describes the amazing and proven properties of blessing and healing which Allah has bestowed on this water.

Reading this book should make the drinking of Zamzam water an even sweeter and more enriching experience!

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